



Urban Forestry Update

S T A T E A C T I V I T I E S

Smart Growth

May 2000

Smart Growth involves applying certain growth or developmental principles toward balancing environmental sustainability and the economic and social quality of life. Smart Growth can be applied on many levels, from large metropolitan areas that are trying to curb urban sprawl to more rural areas that are seeking efficient development in order to maintain the economic viability and the character of the community. Smart Growth; however, is not an entirely new concept. Landscape ordinances developed in the 1960's and 1970's to control land development and urban expansion have proven effective in some areas. Reported here are just some of the efforts being made in the South, to integrate Smart Growth with urban forestry in order to develop healthier, more livable communities. The information provided in this update is intended to spread knowledge about, and plant seeds for new ideas for the growing role of urban forestry.

Initiatives, Ordinances, and Plans

Gap Creek Conservation Community Development (Sherwood, AR)

Gap Creek, the first environmentally sensitive residential development in Arkansas, is being developed under the direction of Tyne and Associates Neighborhood Planning, Design, and Development in Sherwood, AR. The conservation development concept was formulated with assistance from the city planning and engineering staff and communicated to the people through public hearings. This concept plan designates trees and critical root zones to be preserved, and locations for equipment parking and storage, concrete washout areas, and protective fencing. Of the 72 lots offered for sale in 1998, 68 percent

were sold by April 1999 at an average of \$3,000 more than in competing areas. Contact Patti Erwin at (501) 442-8627.

Bobwhite Quail Initiative (Georgia)

Due to urban sprawl and new farming techniques, including more reliance on pesticides, Georgia's quail habitat and food supply have been greatly reduced. As a result, the population of this species has declined more than 70 percent over the past 30 years. Wildlife officials hope to begin reversing this trend in the fall when they kick off a pilot program known as *Georgia's Bobwhite Quail Initiative*, which will offer incentives and cost-sharing payments to landowners who agree to provide quail habitat. Contact John Bowers at (912) 262-3174.

Post Properties, Inc. and Georgia Tech Partnership (Atlanta, GA)

Post Properties, Inc. CEO John Williams has endowed a \$1.5 million chair at Georgia Tech's College of Architecture that will lead off a fund-raising initiative for the Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development. The center would devise ways to guide commercial and residential development toward improving general livability, reducing vehicular emissions, and creating multi-modal transportation that would include buses or light rail as well as accommodating cars. Contact Georgia Tech College of Architecture at (404) 894-2350.



The Gap Creek master planned community has been designed with greenways, wooded buffers, parks, trails, and buffered riparian areas for its' residents enjoyment (Picture courtesy of Tyne and Associates).



An example of how the CityGreen software can be used to analyze the canopy cover and impervious surfaces for one city block. This information will help planners and natural resource professionals make better decisions related to Smart Growth (Graphic representing one city block and its present and projected tree cover. Picture courtesy of American Forests).

Atlanta's Smart Growth Study (Atlanta, GA)

American Forests, in a joint project with the Georgia Conservancy, are comparing the results of development in two fast-growing suburbs of Atlanta. One community followed recommendations from a community design workshop; the other community had no such help. Utilizing American Forests CityGreen software, the study will use satellite images and aerial photos to compare the interaction between the city infrastructure and the "green" infrastructure. The Conservancy plans to use the results to help citizens and government leaders understand the value of retaining greenery through Smart Growth planning. Contact the Georgia Conservancy at (404) 876-2900.

Smart Ordinances for Smart Growth (Bentonville, AR)

The City of Bentonville is incorporating Smart Growth ordinances into its planning procedures. The city passed a Tree Preservation Ordinance and revised the Landscape Ordinance. It also trained utility employees in proper pruning procedures. Contact Rich Lane or Troy Galloway at (501) 271-3126.

Tree Protection and Preservation Ordinance (Fayetteville, AR)

The City of Fayetteville passed a Tree

Protection and Preservation Ordinance that stipulates a certain percentage of trees are to be protected based on the zoning area. A preservation plan is required with each building or grading permit, depending on which is applicable to the project. This ordinance has remained effective due to the integral enforcement and support of the city administration. Contact Patty Erwin at (501) 442-8627.

Urban and Community Forestry Grant Assistance Program (Georgia)

Smart Growth and Sustainability was one of four focuses of Georgia's 1999 Urban and Community Forestry Program. Emphasis was given to proposals that promoted tree ordinance development and strategic planning, sharing of resources, and Smart Growth or urban/rural forest interface issues. Contact Susan Reisch at (404) 298-3935.

Maryland Forest Conservation Act (Maryland)

The Maryland Forest Conservation Act was adopted to conserve the State's forest resources during land development. The act requires identifying existing forest stands, protecting the most desirable forest stands, and designating areas for reforestation. It also establishes standards for local development. In addition,

the act protects forests and trees in any sensitive areas identified during the local planning or comprehensive land-use plan adoption process. Contact Marian Honecny at (410) 260-8511.

Growth Management Plan Curbs Development (Collier County, FL)

An order has been put into effect by Florida's Governor and his Cabinet halting all large scale suburban development until a new growth management plan has been agreed upon and implemented. This order will remain in place until its scheduled review or its expiration in 2002. Public input will be sought via the internet to assist in setting new management guidelines. Contact Maria Cahill at (850) 487-4545.

Urban Tree Advisory Committee Guides Development Code

(Athens, GA)

The Athens-Clarke County (GA) Urban Tree Advisory Committee is cooperating with the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department and John Fregonese of Fregonese and Calthorpe Associates to incorporate tree protection and replacement into the new land development code. The Committee organized a field trip for Planning Department staff and John Fregonese that highlighted some of the natural resource issues related to land development. Contact Ingrid Sather at (706) 559-4225.



Smart Growth Plan for Baton Rouge (Baton Rouge, LA)

The City of Baton Rouge, the State of Louisiana, and the private sector, cooperatively contracted with Duany, Plater-Zyberk, of Miami, FL to draft a Smart Growth revitalization plan for the city. This plan proposes that new developments cater to pedestrians by focusing on traffic reduction, open space planning, and beautification. The plan also recommends using an existing rail line to connect the two local universities with downtown. Through these efforts, the city hopes to attract residents and commerce to the downtown area. The plan has not yet been officially adopted; however, of the 104 initiatives proposed, 63 have already been implemented. The plan is predicted to be successful because of solid community support and the diversity of the consultant team, which included a transportation engineer, a retail strategist, and an implementation strategist. Contact Boo Thomas at (225) 267-6300.

Bethany Cool Communities (Bethany, OK)

The City of Bethany is implementing Smart Growth concepts in its restoration of the tree cover to the city skyline. Utilizing American Forests CityGreen software, city planners are developing a plan for a 40-acre plot of land within the city limits that will serve as a basis for management decisions for the rest of the city's trees. If successful, the project may become the model for other Oklahoma cities and towns. Contact Mark Bays at (405) 522-6150.

A Process Guide for Smart Growth (Knoxville, TN)

From a need to provide a better resource to towns and counties of medium to small size, the University of Tennessee – Knoxville, developed the publication *Smart Growth for Tennessee Towns and Counties: A Process Guide*. This guide summarizes the basic steps in a Smart Growth visioning and planning process and reviews techniques that can be used at each step. With cooperative efforts through state, local, and private entities, the guide was developed to target all communities that need to plan for change, but specifically those which must do so with limited staffs and budgets. Contact Mary English, (423) 974-4251 or <http://eerc.ra.utk.edu/smart.htm>.

Workshops and Conferences

Tree Ordinance Development Training (Georgia)

The Georgia Forestry Commission is planning a training workshop for their field foresters on assisting communities in developing tree ordinances. Contact Susan Reisch at (404) 298-3935.

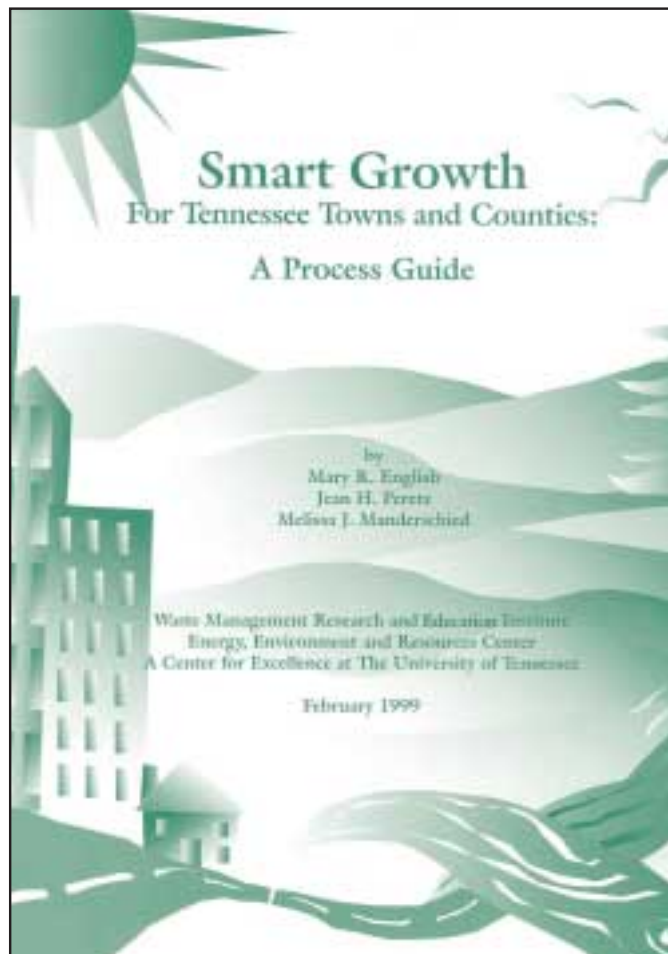
Blueprints for Successful Communities (Athens, GA)

The Georgia Conservancy, the University of Georgia School of Environmental Design, the Georgia Tech College of Architecture, and the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department worked together to conduct the *Blueprints for Successful Communities Workshop* in February 1999. This workshop solicited community involvement in analyzing the focus areas and featured a panel of noted plan-

ners who evaluated the planning process. The objective of the workshop was to build on the work currently underway on the Athens-Clarke County Comprehensive Plan. The Georgia Conservancy and its partners expect this workshop to promote community involvement in the planning process across the State. Contact John Stockbridge at (706) 613-3515.

Environmental Living Conference (Atlanta, GA)

Southface Energy Institute hosted its Annual Conference in November 1999. The Institute feels that achieving sustainability begins with choices we make every day. This conference explored ways individuals can use resources wisely and protect the environment, thereby helping to solve serious energy and environmental problems. The conference offered hands-on training for home energy conservation as well as traditional lectures on environmental living. Contact Southface Energy Institute at (404) 872-3549.



The Guide covers topics such as choosing strategies, visioning, and computer tools (Picture courtesy of University of Tennessee).



Green Infrastructure Roundtable (Atlanta, GA)

The Sustainable Atlanta Roundtable, presented by the Inter-professional Community Design Collaborative, The Georgia Conservancy, Consulting Engineers Council of Georgia, and Southface Energy Institute, was formed to create an ongoing dialogue among an interdisciplinary group of architects, engineers, planners, and others interested in sustainable development in the Atlanta region. The roundtable discussion will address issues such as environmental sustainability, interdisciplinary interest, and the creation of models for community-wide application. Contact Southface Energy Institute at (404) 872-3549, ext. 124.

Greenprints 2000 (Atlanta, GA)

This sustainable development conference, which took place in January 2000, focused on issues such as "green construction," and sustainable communities design and development. Hosted by Southface Energy Institute, the conference evaluated the latest economic and technological trends and assessed the environmental and market challenges to this emerging field. Contact Southface Energy Institute at (404) 872-3549 ext.126 or email greenprints2000@southface.org.

Hurricane Hugo-10 Years Later (Charlotte, NC)

Because hurricanes severely damage coastal cities and towns, the Charlotte Arborist Association and the International Society of Arboriculture-Southern Chapter, conducted a 1-day seminar on the effects of catastrophic weather on urban forest structure. Focusing on weather patterns, storm preparedness, and hazard-tree assessments, the workshop provided attendees with planning tools and ideas to minimize tree failures when violent weather strikes. Contact Steve Ketner at (704) 336-4262.

Tree-Mendous Communities (Raleigh, NC)

The *Tree-Mendous Communities Workshop* was organized by the Triangle J Council of Government and the North Carolina Urban Forestry Council to focus on the development of tree conservation ordinances that promote awareness and discuss how these ordinances effect the residents of North Carolina. This workshop brought together foresters, planners, forest landowners, and staff from local, state and national

organizations, demonstrating how the concerns of all these groups can be successfully worked into a tree conservation ordinance. The workshop keynote speaker, Nick Mata, discussed the Prince George County Preservation Ordinance, which has been regarded as a national model. Contact Sarah Mitchell at (919) 733-2162, ext. 248, or email NCUFC@aol.com.

U&CF Annual Conference-Make Way for Trees (Tulsa, OK)

The Oklahoma Urban and Community Forestry Council presented its annual conference, *Make Way for Trees*, in October 1999. This conference covered topics such as urban soils, in-fill development, open-space planning, and ways to minimize sidewalk damage from urban tree roots. James Urban, the keynote speaker, discussed soil-based design concepts that could promote healthier urban trees. Contact Mark Bays at (405) 522-6150.

Rail-Volution 99: Building Livable Communities with Transit (Dallas, TX)

The *Rail-Volution Conference*, held in September 1999, enabled attendees to compare their communities' growth and transit plans with other strategies, prospective as well as implemented, from across the country. Contact Rail-Volution 99 at (503) 797-1746 or email at convene@aol.com.

Green Communities Train-the-Trainer Workshop

(Shepherdstown, WV)
The Environmental Protection Agency held the third annual *Green*

Communities Train-the-Trainer Workshop on November 3-4, 1999 in Shepherdstown, WV. The workshop will offered information useful to local communities working on sustainability. Community-based organizations concerned with the environment, economic development, and community development, as well as State and local officials were invited to participate. Contact Nancy Grundahl at (215) 814-2729.

This bulletin is also available in an electronic format through State and Private Forestry on the Southern Region home page: <http://www.urbanforestrysouth.org>. Please call (706) 559-4225 for more information on the Urban Forestry Update Series.

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SMART GROWTH WEBSITES

American Farmland Trust	http://www.farmland.org
American Planning Association	http://www.planning.org
Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy	http://www.brook.edu
Conservation Fund	http://www.conservationfund.org
National Main Street Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation	http://www.mainst.org
National Neighborhood Coalition	http://www.neighborhoodcoalition.org
National Trust for Historic Preservation	http://www.nthp.org
National Resources Defense Council	http://www.nrdc.org
Northeast-Midwest Institute	http://www.nemw.org
Rail-Volution	http://www.railvolution.org
Scenic America	http://www.scenic.org
Sierra Club	http://www.sierraclub.org
Smart Growth Network	http://www.smartgrowth.org
SprawlWatch	http://www.sprawlwatch.org/resources.html
Surface Transportation Policy Project	http://www.transact.org
Trust for Public Land	http://www.tpl.org